

ABOUT ADVANCE MEDICAL DIRECTIVES



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WHAT ARE ADVANCE MEDICAL DIRECTIVES* ?

They could be a living will or a durable power of attorney for health-care -- either document allows you to give directions about your future medical care.

IT'S YOUR RIGHT

to accept or refuse medical care. Advance directives can protect this right if you ever become mentally or physically unable to choose or communicate your wishes due to:

- an accident
- illness.

* Referred to more simply as "advance directives" in this booklet.



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WHY LEARN ABOUT ADVANCE DIRECTIVES?

**Because they're
valuable tools!
Advance directives
can help:**

YOU

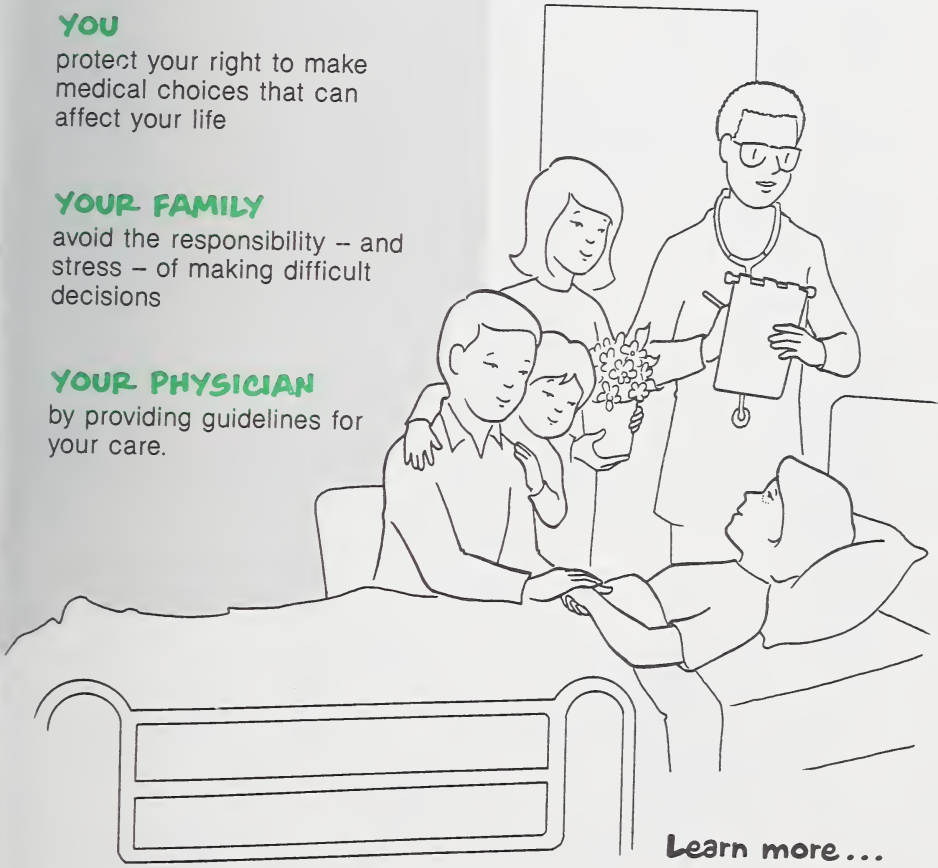
protect your right to make
medical choices that can
affect your life

YOUR FAMILY

avoid the responsibility – and
stress – of making difficult
decisions

YOUR PHYSICIAN

by providing guidelines for
your care.



Learn more ...

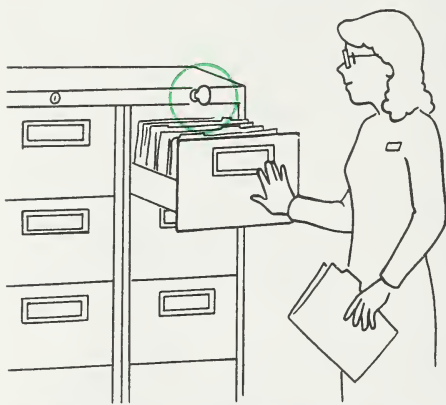
This booklet contains general information about advance directives. Because laws and regulations vary from state to state and are subject to change, this booklet cannot take the place of legal counsel.

ALL PATIENTS HAVE RIGHTS

These include the right to:

PRIVACY

Your personal and medical information is confidential. Medical records and communications with your physician must be kept private.



"INFORMED CONSENT"

Your physician must clearly explain the advantages and risks of any procedures, tests or treatments. You must give your permission for such care. You have the right to refuse any treatment.



INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR CONDITION

You must be kept up to date about your medical condition, treatments and your chances for recovery.



INFORMATION ABOUT ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

In most cases, advance directives and your rights as a patient must be explained to you.



ADVANCE DIRECTIVES CAN PROTECT PEOPLE IN EXTREME CONDITIONS

These people may be unable to communicate due to:

IRREVERSIBLE BRAIN DAMAGE

or brain disease, which can affect their ability to think as well as communicate

PERMANENT COMA

(or other unconscious states), which can leave them unconscious without hope of recovery

TERMINAL ILLNESS,


which may lead to brain damage and loss of consciousness.



Without advance directives, people in these conditions have little or no choice in the treatments they receive.

ADVANCE DIRECTIVES CAN LIMIT LIFE-PROLONGING MEASURES

when there's little or no chance of recovery.



For example, advance directives may enable patients to make their feelings known about:

CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION (CPR)

-- used to restore stopped breathing and/or heartbeat

INTRAVENOUS (IV) THERAPY

-- used to provide food, water and/or medication through a tube placed in a vein, when patients can no longer eat or drink normally

FEEDING TUBES

-- inserted through the nose, throat, etc., to provide nutrition, when patients can no longer eat normally

RESPIRATORS

-- machines used to keep patients breathing

DIALYSIS

-- a method of cleaning patients' blood by machine, when kidneys no longer work properly

PAIN RELIEF

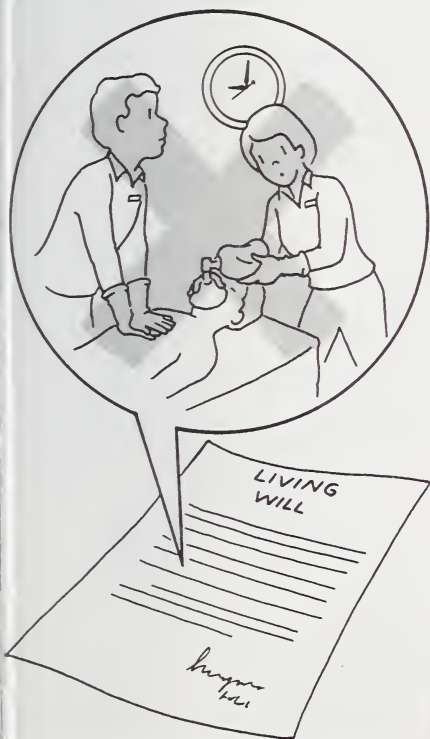
-- use of medications to lessen discomfort.

UNDERSTAND THE 2 TYPES OF ADVANCE DIRECTIVES:

LIVING WILLS

These are written instructions that explain your wishes regarding health care, should you have a terminal condition.

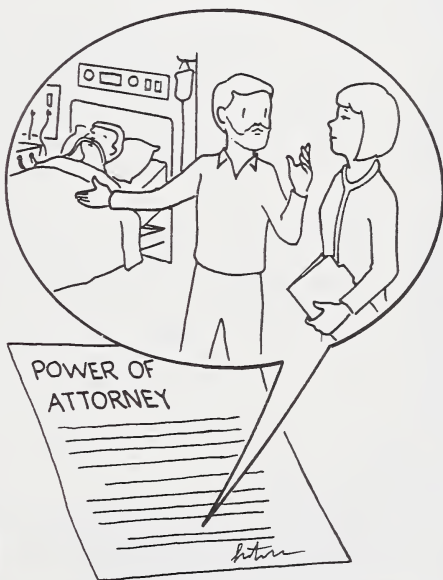
They're called "living" wills, because they take effect while a patient is still alive.



DURABLE POWERS OF ATTORNEY

These documents allow you to name a person (called a proxy) to make decisions for you if you become unable to do so. You can specify if your proxy is allowed to make decisions about:

- health care
- legal matters
- finances.



Even if your state does not currently recognize living wills, you may want to use one in addition to a durable power of attorney. This may express your wishes as completely and specifically as possible. Your state may have special forms to use.

LET YOUR VALUES BE YOUR GUIDE,

when creating advance directives.

CONSIDER WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU

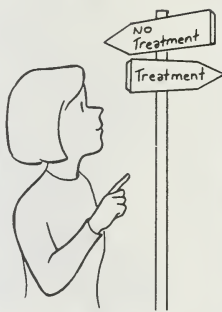
Which of these statements express how you think you'd feel if you were near death?

It's important for me to:

- die without pain and suffering



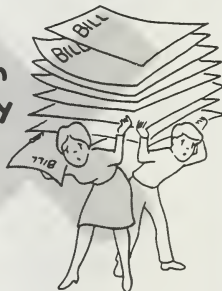
- be able to make my own decisions



- leave my family with good memories



- not be a burden on my family



- act according to my religious beliefs



- be with my loved ones at death.



CONSIDER THE MEDICAL POSSIBILITIES

IMAGINE YOURSELF:

- in a coma (or other unconscious condition)
- with permanent brain damage
- terminally ill.

THEN -- ASK YOURSELF

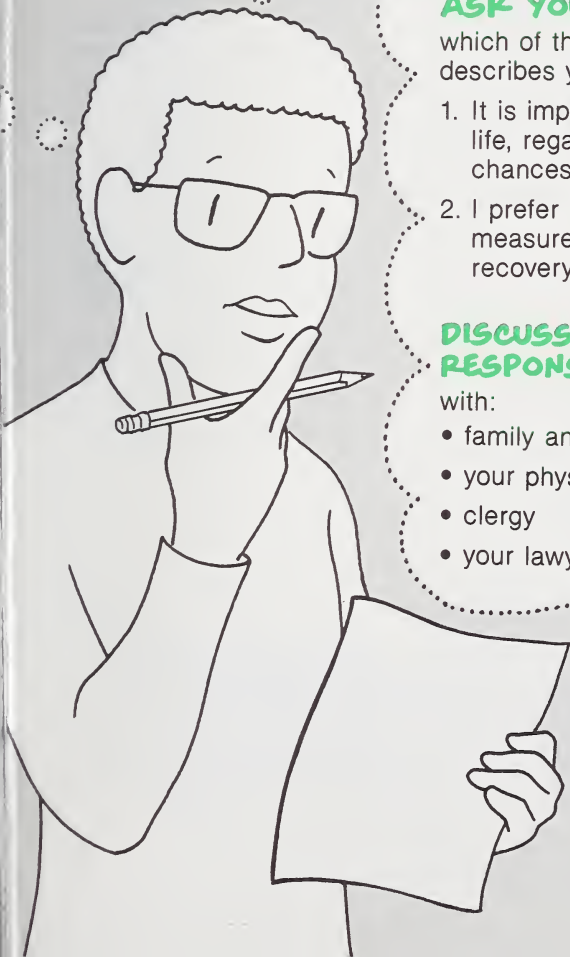
which of these statements best describes your feelings:

1. It is important to me to prolong life, regardless of pain, chances for recovery and cost.
2. I prefer to avoid life-prolonging measures if the chances for recovery are not good.

DISCUSS YOUR RESPONSES

with:

- family and friends
- your physician
- clergy
- your lawyer.



HOW DO I CREATE ADVANCE DIRECTIVES?

Here are some
steps to follow:



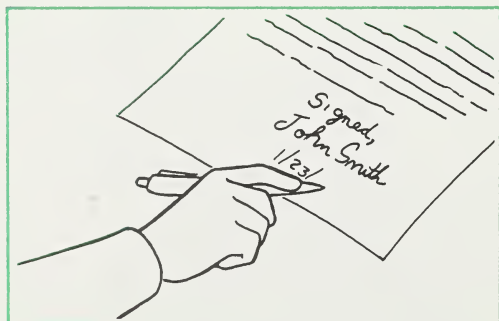
CHECK THE LAWS IN YOUR STATE

regarding living wills and
durable power of attorney.



PUT YOUR WISHES IN WRITING,

and be as specific as
possible (forms may be
available from the
sources listed on p.14).



SIGN AND DATE YOUR ADVANCE DIRECTIVES,

and have them witnessed
and notarized, if neces-
sary in your state.



KEEP A CARD IN YOUR WALLET

stating that you have advance directives (and where to find them).



GIVE YOUR PHYSICIAN A COPY

to be kept as part of your medical records.



DISCUSS YOUR ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

with your family and friends. Give copies to a relative or friend who is likely to be notified in an emergency.

REVIEW YOUR ADVANCE DIRECTIVES REGULARLY,

and make changes as necessary. Inform your physician, family and proxy of any changes.

NOTE: If you use a durable power of attorney, be sure to give a copy to your proxy.

SOME SPECIAL ISSUES

you may want to consider:

"DO NOT RESUSCITATE" (DNR) ORDERS

A DNR order allows you to refuse attempts to restore heartbeat. Discuss this option with your physician.

EMERGENCY ROOM



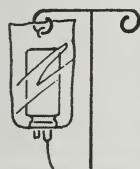
ORGAN DONATION

Advance directives can state your wishes to donate specific organs (or your entire body).

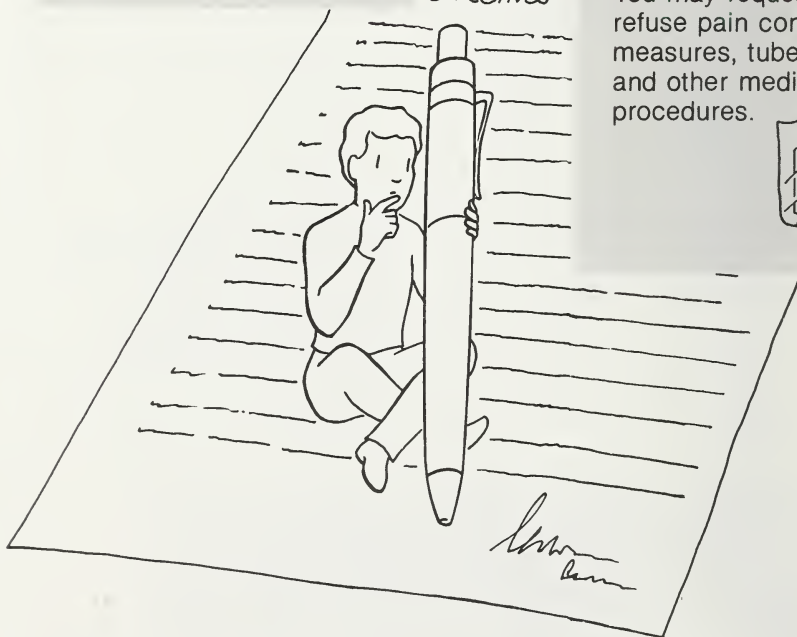


SPECIFIC TREATMENTS AND PROCEDURES

You may request or refuse pain control measures, tube feeding and other medical procedures.



Advance Directives



SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Can I
refuse
treatment
for my
child?

You may in some cases, depending on a medical evaluation of the:

- child's condition
- chances of recovery
- expected effects of treatment.



What if I
change my
mind after I
fill out my
advance
directives?

You can always change or cancel your advance directives. In some cases, you may even cancel them orally.



My relative
has a valid
living will --
can I prevent it
from taking
effect?

Generally no, unless you can prove that the relative was not thinking clearly when he or she created the living will.



HELP AND INFORMATION ARE AVAILABLE

If you need help in preparing advance directives,
or if you'd like more information, contact:

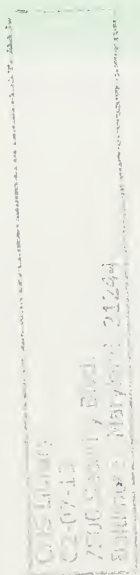
A LAWYER

**HOSPITALS, HOSPICES
AND LONG-TERM
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**CONCERN FOR DYING/
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250 West 57th Street
New York, NY 10107



CONSIDER ADVANCE DIRECTIVES IN YOUR HEALTH-CARE PLANNING!

✓ **KNOW YOUR RIGHTS**

– and take steps to protect them.



✓ **DISCUSS YOUR WISHES**

with your family and physician.



✓ **REVIEW YOUR ADVANCE DIRECTIVES**

and make sure they express your wishes clearly.



ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

Planning is the key to protecting your rights!

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